



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Taking care of the small print

By Warren Edwardes

Financial Times; Dec 24, 2003

From Mr Warren Edwardes.

Sir, In your article "Credit card fine print attacked by MPs" (December 16) you refer to the fine print in agreements. Card issuers are "not doing enough to help consumers understand the fine print of agreements".

Does this not miss the whole point of fine print? If the stuff were meant to be read, let alone be intelligible, the print would be of legible size. Amazingly there are quite a few consumer finance companies that have the audacity to rub salt into the wound by arrogantly calling their terms "The Small Print".

Having just set up a wine business I am aware of European Union regulations on the size of characters on wine labels. What seems at first to be typical EU bureaucracy is eminently sensible. I suggest that all agreements and advertisements, be they financial, telephone or other utility, should have no character less than 1.5mm in height. That is about the size of this "O". And no character should be less than 25 per cent of the size of the largest character. That should take care of the small print in roadside posters.

Warren Edwardes, Chief Executive, Wine for Spice, London W2 2YQ

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